

the Phoenix Nest

NEIGHBOR TO PINEWOODS

HE has seen changes in the countryside

The seventy years he's been here, man and boy.

The village he first knew was ringed with woods,

With only one road leading to the town.

There was a sawmill on the stream, and then,

Someone put up a shop for turned-wood things—

Hoe-handles and such. And one man had a press

And printed labels for them—bright red, they were.

Ben showed me some: he used to set the type.

It was a full day's trip to get to town And back; folks went in once a week with eggs

And butter. After a while the electric trolley

Started through; and, as time passed, there were

Less woods, more houses, two or three new schools.

Then autos came. Now all the roads are black

Instead of dirt. And Ben goes on. To him,

While things are different, somehow the place

Looks much the same. He's on a hill and gets

The view over-all. "Still pinewoods round," he'll say;

"Take over east—you'd never guess it's there—

That new state superhighway, as it's called,

The airplane beacon, though, trees can't hide that—

Yonder on Benton's Hill. Yes, woods still stay.

And from the back pantry window I can see

Mount Washington, like always. When we dug

The cellar hole, I thought, we'll always have

A mountain there to look at any time."

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Shylock. 2. Alfred Davidson. 3. Maggie Wylie. 4. Uriah Heep. 5. Elizabeth Bennet. 6. Long John Silver. 7. Cluny Brown. 8. Orlando. 9. Lorna Doone. 10. Ellen Netherby. 11. Romeo. 12. Ichabod Crane. 13. Delilah. 14. Galahad. 15. Elmer Gantry. ENGLISH POET: Samuel Coleridge.

And so things are. Wife dead, and family gone,

Ben Hunt makes out. An odd job here and there

Keeps him content and busy. Some day, he knows,

Death will turn into the yard like an old neighbor

Who stops for a friendly word at the kitchen door.

—DOLORES CAIRNS.

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UNCLE ME NO UNCLES

The popular appeal of motion pictures being what it is, the successful run of "Hamlet" at the Park Avenue Theatre in New York disturbs me in one respect: the perpetuation of the malignment of uncles. The character who plots with Hamlet's mother to kill Hamlet, Sr., and then marries the Mrs. is certainly not admirable; but why couldn't he have been Hamlet's second cousin instead of his uncle?

Shakespeare's plays have many cruel uncles; children's stories also have their share. When two boys are fighting, the one getting the worse of it—to be let up—has to cry "Uncle," apparently the lowest term of degradation. "Uncle," it may be noted, is also slang for pawnbroker and the diminutive termination of carbuncle.

Surely, we uncles don't deserve that! Quite often I've been introduced to the children of friends as "uncle" and I know the reason why. An uncle is the softest touch there is: a patsy, a lollypop surrounded by nephews and nieces—natural and acquired.

For uncles, Christmas comes all year round—to give, not receive. Uncles do not acquire status through birth pains or sleepless vigils in maternity-ward waiting rooms; their status is imposed. However, for the privilege of "enjoying the children," uncles are duty bound to present gifts on such occasions as births, parties, holidays, teething, visits, and in-betweens. A bachelor uncle or childless uncle is particularly favored by parents; for him baby-sitting is considered a treat (oft repeated) and very good discipline. The approach runs something like this: Well, after all, what is an uncle for, anyway?

As counter-action, I have seriously considered proposing the establishment of an Uncle's Day, but I fear it



would only be regarded as another day for receiving gifts from uncle. We uncles cannot resign; there is no society for our protection; our fate is sealed by others. However, we should at least like to face our position with dignity and be regarded in our true light. Accordingly, I beg of our readers, if they must commit some unsavory deed—in a relative sort of way—won't they please do so as a cousin, etc.—not as an uncle.

—SAM BERGMAN.

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EQUILIBRIUM

A writer in the rhyming game Reveals the follies of his dame: Her every harmless secret whim Becomes a stock in trade for him. As his repute begins to rise, Hers may go contrariwise.

—JOHN MCGIFFERT.

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The Peter Pauper Press of Mount Vernon, N. Y., is to be specially commended for the book-making of "The Songs of Sappho" in English translation by many poets, decorated by Paul McPharlin; for "Barrack-Room Ballads & Departmental Ditties," by Rudyard Kipling, decorated by Fritz Kredel; and for "Peter Pauper's Limerick Book, A Collection from Many Sources," illustrated by Herb Roth.

The Swallow Press and William Morrow & Co. have instituted a series called Books of the Renaissance, already having published "Some Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt," edited by Alan Swallow. Now they bring out "Sixty Poems by Scève," introduction, translation, and comment by Wallace Fowlie. Maurice Scève was a sixteenth-century French poet, whose poem to his Délie "set the fashion for a series of poems addressed to a real or an imaginary mistress." Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay, both of the group called The Pléiade, followed his example. —WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

BOOKED for TRAVEL

CLOUDS ON THE WILD BLUE YONDER

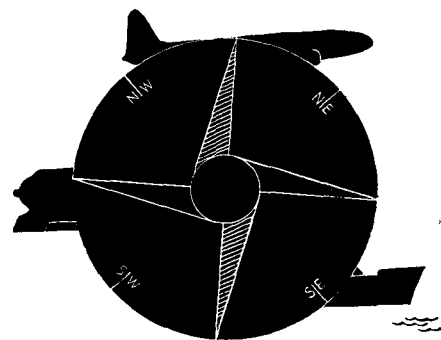
ALTHOUGH one of its announced purposes was to spread peace and good will throughout the world, the Holy Year of 1950 has thus far inspired a notable lack of both among the country's overseas airlines. The vital issue at hand is who is going to fly the pilgrims to Rome during this first Holy Year of the air age and how low the airlines are going to undercut each other to get the business.

After the country's military pilots had proved during the war that flying the Atlantic would be feasible on a commercial, regularly scheduled basis during the peace, the Civil Aeronautics Board in 1945 set about cutting up the European pie. Pan American World Airways was awarded London and Frankfurt, and Trans-World Airline was certificated to operate a line to Paris and Rome. It has been expressed from time to time by partisan representatives of Pan American that they thought the gravy route had been awarded to TWA. On the other hand, TWA executives have indicated that Pan American had been handed the number-one city in Europe. At any rate, both airlines stuck to their knitting and improved the service on the respective routes with the successive institution of Constellations, DC-6's, Boeing Stratocruisers, not to mention such fripperies as sleeper flights, cocktail bars, course-by-course dinner service, orchids for lady travel-

ers, and a red carpet which one line actually spreads across the runway when passengers embark.

It was not without considerable commotion, therefore, that Pan American announced early in December that in concert with an organization known as Felix Roma it planned to fly pilgrims to Rome on ten-day, all-expense tours. The flat fee, including air transportation both ways, all meals and hotel rooms, five days of excursions outside Rome, tickets to museums, theatres, and the opera in season, came to a neat \$698. The regular round-trip, mid-season fare via TWA and Air France, the scheduled airlines, was \$747 for transportation alone. Pan American, which had been beating the drums for years for low-cost, tourist-class air transportation, crowed: "[The plan] is within the means of many thousands of the 30,000,000 Americans who last year received less than \$5,000."

Pan American's announcement was made just one day after the Civil Aeronautics Board invited air carriers to submit application for special flights between New York and Rome. Pan American would fly its pilgrims to Rome as an unscheduled charter airline, yet it would be able to offer Rome passengers the experience, equipment, personnel, confidence, and know-how of its great worldwide service. Felix Roma turned out to be a non-profit Catholic organization formed last summer by the World



Council of Men for Catholic Action. It expects to arrange trips to Rome for more than 300,000 Catholics from the Western Hemisphere. It could also, with some assurance, offer every pilgrim (as it did) an audience with the Pope. One of its executives, Prince Guilio Pacelli, is a nephew of Pius XII.

As a clincher, the announcement issued jointly by Felix Roma and Pan American said: "The low cost passage will implement the Papal Bull of May 26, 1949, in which the hope is expressed that 'an immense multitude from every corner of the world . . . may flock to this beloved City in quest of the riches of Heaven. . . .' The Holy Year Jubilee in 1950 . . . is designed especially to combat the challenge of Communism."

If TWA now chose to fight Pan American's entrance into the Rome run they might ostensibly be criticized for being (1) anti-Catholic and (2) pro-Communist.

TWA decided to take the risk. "We have served Rome to the best of our ability," a spokesman said quietly, "and we did not make any attempt to serve London during the Olympics of 1948, since the city was clearly off our assigned route. We have made certain commitments and incurred certain expenditures to service Rome during the Holy Year. Felix Roma and Pan American with two flights a week and more frequent flights planned later in the season is flying on schedule, and we feel our territory is being invaded. We will fight it with superior service or charter flights of our own. It's a cinch we won't take it lying down."

The allusion by the TWA spokesman to "certain commitments" referred to the addition of some twenty Constellations to the European service. In airline circles there were those who insidiously insisted that TWA was financing its new Constellations by charging high rates to pilgrims during a Holy Year.

Six days after the first Pan American proclamation the International Air Transport Association, whose membership includes Pan American and the regular Rome carriers, TWA

Airline Fares Compared with New Rail Fares

Fare comparisons below do not include Federal transportation tax of 15%. The fares are figured on a 12½% increase over old published fares in railroad timetables.

From	To	Airline		Railroad	
		1st Class	Coach	1st Class	Coach
Chicago	New York	\$44.10	\$29.60	\$48.64*	\$30.71
New York	Cleveland	25.10	17.80	30.70*	19.33
Pittsburgh	New York	20.60	12.80	23.84*	14.85
Washington	Chicago	36.80	24.30	41.70*	25.91
Chicago	Pittsburgh	26.25	16.80	25.25*	15.86
Detroit	New York	30.10	21.00	36.39*	23.35
Cleveland	Washington	19.80	12.50	23.39*	14.51
Pittsburgh	Washington	12.10	7.50	16.84*	10.05
Washington	New York	13.40	8.60	11.85**	7.58
Cleveland	Chicago	19.00	12.95	17.58**	11.57
Detroit	Washington	26.30	16.70	32.33*	20.09

* Includes first-class rail fare and Pullman lower berth.

** Includes first-class rail fare and parlor-car seat.